

**To:** Mayor-Elect Lightfoot Transition Team - Good Governance

**From:** Forest Gregg, DataMade

**Prompt:** Make City elected officials more accountable and more representative of the communities they serve.

**A potential initiative (one sentence)**

The City Of Chicago should strengthen the existing lobbyist disclosure requirements to require the timely, comprehensive, and specific disclosure of lobbying of City officials.

**How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative**

Under the current lobbying disclosure requirements, the public doesn't know who was lobbied or what they were lobbied to do, and they don't know the lobbying happened until three months later. If the lobbyist is a non-profit, the public usually will never know anything about the lobbying.

First, the current code only requires quarterly filings of lobbying activities. This means that the decisions that lobbyists are petitioning have usually been decided by the time the public can learn about lobbyist activity. The disclosures of lobbying activity should be at least monthly.

Second, most non-profit lobbyists are not required to disclose any of their lobbying activities. This means that some of the most frequent lobbyists and most consequential lobbying activities are completely shielded from public scrutiny. Lobbyist registration and disclosure requirements should be extended to all non-profits that have some threshold annual budget and/or who undertake lobbying activities more than once per calendar year.

Third, the disclosure of the nature of the lobbying activity is so vague and abbreviated that it is not possible to know the public official being lobbied or the specific administrative or legislative action that lobbyists are trying to influence.

ACTION	ACTION_SOUGHT	DEPARTMENT	CLIENT_ID	CLIENT_NAME
Administrative	Affordable Housing Agreem...	PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	46582	CCA MDA II LLC
Administrative	Affordable Housing Agreem...	CITY COUNCIL / ALDERMEN	46582	CCA MDA II LLC
Legislative	Planned Development	ZONING COMMITTEE	45700	RIU Chicago LLC
Legislative	Planned Development	PLANNING COMMISSION	45700	RIU Chicago LLC
Legislative	Planned Development	PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	45700	RIU Chicago LLC
Legislative	Planned Development	CITY COUNCIL / ALDERMEN	45700	RIU Chicago LLC
Legislative	Street Vacation	COMMITTEES OF THE CITY COUNCIL	25462	Riverside Investment and Developm...
Legislative	Street Vacation	CITY COUNCIL / ALDERMEN	25462	Riverside Investment and Developm...
Legislative	Street Vacation	TRANSPORTATION	25462	Riverside Investment and Developm...

## What is happening today that we need to keep

Publishing of the data on the City's data portal is a best practice, and should be kept. The infrastructure for electronic reporting already exists within the Board of Ethics.

## What we need to implement in the next 100 days

Legislative changes would be required to increase the frequency of disclosures and extending lobbying disclosure to nonprofits. A change in the municipal code would also be needed to require lobbyists to disclose the public official they are lobbying.

However, within the current municipal code, the board of ethics and the law department could require much more specificity in the "brief description of the legislation or administrative action involved." For example, if the lobbying pertains to zoning change for a property, the addresses or PINs of the property should be reported. If the lobbying pertains to pending legislation, the legislative identifier should be reported.

Further, the administration could immediately model the lobbying disclosures they desire by reporting the lobbying activities they receive. The Cook County Assessor's office has been doing this.

## What we can plan for longer-term implementation

Propose and pass a City Council ordinance to strengthen lobbyist disclosure.

## What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative

Some members of council will resist stronger disclosure requirements. This might be addressed by having stronger requirements apply first to lobbying administrative officials and then phasing those requirements for Council.

*Our mission is to mobilize people and resources to force a change in the community of Greater Englewood by breaking down barriers in communication and promoting positivity through solution-based approaches.*

**Asiaha Butler**  
President

**Cherice L. Price**  
Treasurer/Strategic Advisor

**Demond Drummer**  
Strategic Advisor

**Antoine Butler**  
Community Outreach

April 15, 2019

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Asiaha Butler, President | Executive Director, R.A.G.E. & Member of the Good Governance Committee

RE: Objective – Adaptive Government Responsive to Residents Needs

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In order to advance a more adaptive government, that responds to resident needs and interests, the new administration should conduct a thorough examination of the tools, resources and models currently being used in the most impoverished neighborhoods of Chicago. Many Chicago neighborhoods are in an economic crisis and there are tools designed to spark economic development activities such as the Tax Increment Financing Districts which has been abused and ineffectively implemented. One of the initiatives that needs to be executed in the first 100 days, aligns with Mrs. Lightfoot position of bringing transparency and greater community engagement to the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts.

An instantaneous critical assessment of current TIF redevelopment goals and projects from a wholistic approach should be applied to these districts that overlays in the police districts that experience the greatest crime and highest unemployment rates.

This would allow the new administration to view the affiliation between high crime areas and ineffective TIF economic development activities in the communities that have been starved of resources and experiencing trauma due to the abuse of these tools. These TIF districts should be deemed as a priority for bold, transformative change that can have an immediate impact as it relates to job creation and workforce development in the neighborhoods that desperately needs it. The goals and values of this administration is focused on equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation and unfortunately, Chicago is known for a Tale of Two Cities, with policies and initiatives that model inequities and a racially biased approach that have built economic deserts throughout the city's south and west sides.

The current practices of TIF development projects are clear examples of tools that have not benefitted the neighborhoods in which they were designed to served and only built more division in our city based on class, race and zip codes. TIF reform needs to be a wholistic customized approach for the areas in dire of need of economic engines that creates jobs, support local entrepreneurs, and train our next generation of citizens for the work force.

A newly formed TIF oversight design committee with subject matter experts, active TIF reforms groups, residents, and community leaders of these neighborhoods should be created in the first 100 days to help design the desired outcomes necessary to advance an innovative, community led

process on how TIF districts could be realigned to benefit these blighted communities. As current projects are assessed in these designated neighborhoods, we should be asking the following and reviewing these districts from a race and equity lens –

- Are the objectives for current projects based on the immediate concerns of the neighborhood?
- Do community members understand and are they aware of how these goals that positively affect them?
- Have residents whom contribute to the TIFs in that area involved with the decision making of community development projects?
- Do the people participating in the community development initiative represent the current population of that district?

The long-term plan would be to mandate neighborhood led local TIF Oversight Councils in the communities that are the most traumatized by generational disinvestment, the lack of employment opportunities, and high crime. With this initiative it is imperative that the decision-making process is more democratic, transparent, and responsive to local aspirations so that TIF funds do what they are supposed to -revitalize communities, in a way that is organic to those communities themselves. What is clear, however, is that community education, local agency, and grassroots organizing will be key to whatever solutions are pursued. The Resident Association of Greater Englewood already has an impressive working model for Englewood residents to get directly involved on issues that affect their lives and launched a social media campaign - #TIFThursday - to inform and raise awareness to residents about of the basic of TIF functions and recent development projects that directly or indirectly impact them.

Ultimately, the TIF process should be controlled by the communities each project is commissioned to serve. In an era of increased privatization, gentrification and private development, especially relevant for Chicago neighborhoods, these tasks may seem like an insurmountable challenge. Yet Chicago citizens have proven to be resilient, creative, and persistent in the face of many such obstacles that threaten the existence of their community. There should be efforts or training that will increase knowledge for the local alderman and residents of how the TIF process works. Implement bi-annually “State of the TIF Address” organize by the mayor, city council and local TIF oversight councils to infuse transparency and local participation.

TIFs future use must create direct strategies that will produce long term sustainable change; this can and should happen with residents ensuring accountability, more transparency and demanding that TIF programming maximizes job creation and development as future investment begins. This initiative must lend on the expertise of local community organizing efforts to forge a new model for TIF reform with lasting local and national implications for greater public access and citizen democracy.

Asiah Butler, Executive Director  
R.A.G.E. – Resident Association of Greater Englewood



TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot  
FROM: Ami Gandhi, Director of Voting Rights & Civic Empowerment,  
Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights  
Co-Chair, Good Governance Transition Committee  
SUBJECT: Initiative on Racial Equity Impact Assessment  
DATE: April 15, 2019

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Thank you for the opportunity to propose an initiative to build Chicagoans' trust in our government and further the new administration's goals of good governance. Racial equity impact assessments will be essential to the new administration's pursuit of its goal to create "a more adaptive government that responds to resident needs and interests."

Proposed Initiative: In partnership with community stakeholders, the new administration should conduct and publish a racial equity impact assessment (REIA) at the outset of pursuing *each* reform effort related to good governance.

REIAs are a tool used to examine how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed policy, action, or decision. Given that race is inextricably intertwined with Chicago's history and government, REIAs offer a concrete and systematic way to grapple with this reality while rebuilding our government. This proposed initiative does not require starting from scratch. The Government Alliance on Race and Equity has an established methodology that has been adopted by over 100 government bodies nationwide. REIAs involve reviewing public policy and practices with the goal of preventing disparate racial impact and promoting more equitable and inclusive policies that meaningfully serve the needs of constituents. Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights would be happy to provide examples of successful, cost-effective REIAs as well as templates for conducting future assessments.

A template for a REIA could include build upon following types of questions that have been used by other local governments in the past: How does the proposed government reform impact racial disparities? How does the proposed reform support and advance racial equity? Have voices of groups affected by the government reform been involved with its development? What solutions were proposed by these groups and communities? What resources will be needed to ensure that reform proposals are successful in addressing disparities? If the reform will increase disparities, what alternatives or modifications can be explored?

Infusing the Value of Equity:

Utilizing REIAs at the front end of a good governance reform can help uncover interests that would otherwise be discovered after policy implementation or, in other words, uncover unintended inequitable consequences of reforms. Just as one example, in discussions of whether to merge the election board functions of Chicago and Cook County, there would need to be a rigorous examination of racial equity implications before a merger is set into motion. Would polling place elimination be a part of such a merger, and what would the corresponding impact be on community members with limited transportation access who wish to exercise their hard-fought right to vote in

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person and who would have to travel farther to access a polling place? These are examples of questions that should be explored during the early stages of consideration of each good governance reform.

Infusing the Values of Transparency and Accountability:

The use of REIAs would help reveal data and facts associated with impacts on various racial groups, instead of policymakers relying in assumptions about the groups affected. If REIAs were disseminated publicly, community stakeholders would gain access to details about why a certain decision was made and whose perspectives were considered in that decision.

Infusing the Values of Diversity and Inclusion:

REIAs have potential to create more community buy-in and a more robust option for meaningful community engagement. By being in the practice of conducting REIAs, the administration could create space for different stakeholder groups to engage in meaningful conversation, information sharing, and problem solving.

Infusing the Value of Transformation:

As an example, when it comes to redistricting reform, instituting a REIA at the front end could be transformative. Too often, discussions of redistricting reform in Chicago and Illinois have stalled when a proposed system crafted by government reform experts fails to win broad support across diverse stakeholders. The reform process would be better poised for success if it were reimaged to be a blank canvas from the outset, focused on obtaining extensive input from communities of color whose political power has been diluted by district lines – before assumptions are made about who is best suited to redraw district lines and what criteria they should use.

What is happening today that we need to keep?

While there are limited examples of REIAs conducted or supported by the current administration, the new administration has a ripe opportunity to leverage expertise of Chicago-based stakeholders in crafting and implementing REIAs, including organizations such as Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Chicago United for Equity.

What do we need to implement in the next 100 days?

Sooner rather than later, the new administration should insist upon a framework so that there are shared expectations around the use of REIAs at the front end of good governance reforms. This could take the form of a specific ordinance or directive relating to the use of REIAs as well as training for administration staff.

What challenges might we encounter in executing this initiative?

The careful, consistent use of REIAs will require time on the part of the administration, and this will mean that certain good governance reform initiatives are not ripe for execution right away. However, the time and resources will be well spent, in order to avoid unintended consequences or liability, as well as to lay the foundation for a government that will be truly adaptive and responsive to its residents.

**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**FROM:** Adam Gross, BPI

**PROMPT:** Efficient and Effective Government

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As Mayor, you can make government more efficient and effective, and build a culture of integrity in government service so that fraud and corruption are minimized, by creating a state-of-the-art inspector general system.

Strengthening the inspector general (IG) system can substantially advance many of the core values of your administration. Strong and independent IGs promote transparency, make government more fair and equitable, and ensure that government is accountable. They protect public money from being wasted, and make it harder for public officials to use the levers of government to advance their private interest rather than the public interest. They make it easier for government employees to act ethically when there is pressure to do otherwise.

Chicago currently has six IGs. The City of Chicago Inspector General has comprehensive jurisdiction over City departments and operations, investigative jurisdiction over the City Council, and comprehensive jurisdiction over the Public Building Commission pursuant to an intergovernmental agreement. The five other IGs are assigned, one each, to parts of Chicago's government that are technically separate legal entities, sometimes called "sister agencies": the public schools, the public parks, public housing, public transit, and the City Colleges. The Mayor selects the City of Chicago Inspector General, and the Chicago IG's powers are established by City ordinance. The sister agencies are governed by separate boards, and those boards select the IGs and establish their powers (with the exception of the CPS IG, whose authority and powers are specified by state law), but the Mayor exercises significant control of those boards.

Chicago's IGs have done vitally important work improving government operations and rooting out illegal activity, but all operate with constraints that significantly limit their effectiveness. Many lack independence. Some lack essential powers. Others are hampered by limited jurisdiction. They generally cannot work together, share information, and assist each other to improve their effectiveness.

### **First 100 Days: Enhance Role of City of Chicago Inspector General**

Within the first 100 days, the new administration should draft and then work with the City Council to enact an ordinance that will enhance the City of Chicago Inspector General's independence, power, and duties. For example, the City IG's authority to initiate and carry out investigations of City Council members and audits of City Council committees and programs should be expanded. Investigations should not require written and signed complaints. The IG should be expressly authorized to investigate any kind of misconduct related to official activities of any City employee, including aldermen and employees of the City Council. The IG should be authorized to enforce its administrative subpoenas independently, and not be required, as is currently the case, to use the lawyers of the very City it is supposed to oversee. Within the constraints of its annual budget, the IG should be granted authority to fully manage its own affairs. For example, office staffing should not be subject to approval of the City budget office. The ordinance should also require that all published IG audits and reviews be formally introduced into City Council and be the subject of at least one hearing of the City Council committee with relevant subject-matter expertise.

### **First Year: Enhance Role of “Sister Agency” Inspectors General**

Within the first year, the new administration should convene a task force to explore and make recommendations regarding the sister agency inspectors general, and then work with the boards of the sister agencies to implement the recommendations.

The task force should make specific recommendations about how to enhance the powers of the sister agency IGs. For example, the sister agency IGs should have the power to investigate all complaints, even anonymous ones, and to initiate their own investigations. They should have the power to issue and enforce subpoenas with counsel of their choosing. They should have the power to take testimony under oath. They should have the power to refer matters to and participate in multijurisdictional investigations with law enforcement agencies. They should also have the responsibility to monitor large contracts and do background integrity reviews on senior hires and of companies and their principals that do business with the agency. They should have unfettered authority to audit policies, programs, and procedures in order to both identify and proactively prevent waste or corruption. Jurisdiction should extend to all official activities of all agency board members, officers, employees, and persons and organizations doing business with the agency or seeking to become eligible for its contracts and programs.

The task force should also make recommendations about how to increase the independence of the sister agency IGs. For example, each sister agency IG should be provided with the budget, reporting and managerial independence necessary to assure that it has the resources necessary to do its work effectively. Budgets should be insulated from the exclusive control of the agency an IG oversees, for example by setting a budget floor as a defined percentage of the overall agency budget. To promote continuity in investigations and to permit IGs to act without immediate concern about reappointment, IGs should have a fixed term of office. To ensure that IGs are not fired for being too effective, or for carrying out sensitive investigations, IGs should be removed only for cause, and only after a hearing. IGs must have full managerial control over staffing and operations of their office.

The task force should also make recommendations about how the sister agency IGs could work in coordination to be more effective and efficient—to share information, conduct joint investigations, develop common best practices, and perhaps share resources. One option is for sister agency IGs and the City of Chicago IG to enter into an intergovernmental agreement that establishes protocols for collaboration. Another option is to adopt some version of the model now in place in New York City, where all City IGs are consolidated within a single governmental entity, which encourages and facilitates extensive collaborative, cooperation, and sharing of resources.

### **Challenges**

Enhancing the City of Chicago Inspector General's independence, power, and duties will almost certainly raise concerns among some aldermen, who have not fully embraced previous efforts to increase oversight of the City Council.

Enhancing the power and independence of sister agency IGs and increasing collaboration among all Chicago IGs will require support from each of the sister agency boards, because they are separate legal entities from the City of Chicago. Each of the sister agency boards will likely require encouragement to fully appreciate the benefits that will come from increased transparency, equity, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness. Also, increasing collaboration may create administrative challenges that the task force would need to address. Finally, existing IGs may have legitimate concerns about the extent to which collaboration might diminish their power, independence, and effectiveness. The task force would need to address those concerns.





## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lightfoot Transition Team – Good Governance Committee  
**FROM:** Andy Kang, Executive Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago  
**DATE:** April 15, 2019  
**RE:** Recommendations to Good Governance Committee

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### Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The mission of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago (“Advancing Justice-Chicago”) is to build power through collective advocacy and organizing to achieve racial equity. As part of this mission, Advancing Justice-Chicago has worked for well over a decade to make Chicago the most immigrant-friendly city in the country. A cornerstone of this effort is the issue of language access to government services and information. On February 11, 2019, Mayor-Elect Lightfoot (then Mayoral candidate Lightfoot) participated in the Pan-Asian Voter Empowerment (“PAVE”) Coalition’s mayoral candidate forum hosted at Northeastern Illinois University. During this forum, Advancing Justice-Chicago’s KINETIC youth leaders asked Mayor-Elect Lightfoot if she would support amending the City of Chicago’s Language Access Ordinance (“LAO”) to ensure compliance and also extend its coverage to emergency services and Chicago Public Schools (“CPS”). Mayor-Elect Lightfoot said yes.

Advancing Justice-Chicago seeks to build upon this initial dialogue with its KINETIC youth leaders. Over 200,000 Asian Americans live in Chicago, representing over 20 countries of origin and many more ethnic identities and languages. Asian Americans continue to be the fastest growing racial group in the country, Illinois, and Chicago. According to the 2015 American Community Survey, 37% of Chicago’s Asian American population has limited English proficiency (“LEP”). Despite the abundant evidence of the contributions and positive impact of Asian Americans and immigrants as a whole to Chicago, significant language access issues have persisted for years. For example, LEP Asian Americans in Chicago are paid 19% less than whites, 15% less than Blacks, and 11% less than Latinxs with the same English language ability.

Beginning in 2014, Advancing Justice-Chicago participated in the Mayor’s Office of New Americans’ (“ONA”) Language Access Advisory Committee, culminating in Alderman Ameya Pawar’s introduction and passing of LAO in 2015. Although LAO fell short of Advancing Justice-Chicago’s own recommendations as reflected in the unsuccessful LAO amendment submitted by Ald. Scott Waguespack, LAO was nevertheless a good first step. However, in 2017 and again in 2018, the City of Chicago’s Office of Inspector General (“OIG”) found multiple LAO compliance issues by city departments and issued several recommendations, many of which have not yet been fully implemented. Based on these OIG reports and Advancing Justice-Chicago’s own research, we submit the below recommendations in answering the specific questions laid out by the Good Governance Committee’s transition team per Mayor-Elect Lightfoot’s letter to Advancing Justice-Chicago dated April 4, 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the tight time constraints, Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago did not have the adequate opportunity to share this memo with its PAVE coalition, community partners, and grassroots leaders prior to submission. As with all truly effective policy solutions, these ideas must be community-informed and only finalized in design after a rigorous dialogue process. This memo serves as Advancing Justice-Chicago’s initial thoughts, but additional edits and feedback should be anticipated. As Mayor-Elect Lightfoot publicly committed on February 11, 2019 to meeting with the PAVE coalition to discuss the concerns of the Asian American community, Advancing Justice-Chicago will commit to drafting additional recommendations for that meeting with its partners and leaders.



**What is happening today that we need to keep:**

1. ONA's efforts to increase LAO compliance by city departments;
2. The oversight efforts by OIG to review and report on the LAO compliance by city departments;
3. On-going efforts by city departments to implement its language access plans or form language access plans
4. CPS efforts to effectively inform CPS schools, teachers, counselors, and parents of the recent changes to the World Language Requirement policy, as successfully advocated for by Advancing Justice-Chicago's KINETIC youth leaders last year; and
5. Of special note, the essential work of the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners to provide quality language access to Chicago voters, including their periodic meetings with community organizations such as Advancing Justice-Chicago that can share its feedback with them and explore opportunities for further improvement.

**What we need to implement immediately**

1. An increase in ONA's budget and staffing to adequately equip ONA to achieve its mission, including a game plan for amending and strengthening LAO;
2. ONA reconvening a larger, more transparent, more inclusive Language Access Advisory Council to explore concrete options to improve LAO;
3. Begin an independent and transparent analysis of available data on gaps in city services – including CPS and emergency services - and significant qualitative feedback opportunities for immigrant communities; and
4. Clarify what specific city departments currently fall under LAO's requirements

**What we can plan for longer-term implementation**

1. Based on a thorough community-driven process and informed by the best practices around from cities around the world, amend LAO to ensure enforceable compliance and meaningful access for LEP Chicagoans;
2. Form budget plan to sufficiently support city departments' efforts to comply with strengthened LAO;
3. Implement strategy to explore public, private (including tech), and non-profit partnership opportunities to leverage Chicago's talent and find innovative solutions to language access barriers to city services; and
4. Form community outreach strategy to inform public of significant improvements to language access, including marketing to immigrant communities across the country and abroad.

As a matter of equity, Advancing Justice-Chicago believes addressing these language access issues is long overdue. By laying out a larger vision for Chicago as well as the process by which we find the answers to these problems together, the Lightfoot administration will serve as a model of transparency and accountability, including Chicagoans of all backgrounds and languages. By doing so, the successful implementation of these recommendations will transform Chicago into a truly international city and a model for the world. In a time where some political forces are questioning the value of immigrants, Chicago will be forging a better alternative vision for other cities to follow.

Sincerely,

Andy Kang  
Executive Director



To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

Fr: Abraham Scarr, Director, Illinois PIRG

Re: A more open, representative and diverse government, free from conflicts of interest

Da: 4/15/19

**To create a more open, representative, diverse government, free from conflicts of interest, involve more Chicagoans in all aspects of democratic governance.**

The health of our democracy relies on the vigorous participation of all Chicagoans. Participation comes in many forms, from voting and elections, to direct community input in major city decisions, to participation in community and advocacy organizations in issue campaigns. Civic engagement rates remain low in Chicago, especially among young people. Many Chicagoans are skeptical of engaging in civic life and the political process. Such skepticism is understandable: there are barriers to their participation; they do not see the issues being debated as important to their life; they know of the long history of political corruption; and they see campaigns financed by contributions at levels they can not afford.

Overcoming this skepticism and engaging more Chicagoans will take time, but transformation can begin in the first 100 days. While the theme of my recommendation is to create opportunity for community participation throughout City government, I will focus my recommendations on the most common interaction between citizens and government decisions: elections.

### **Voting**

In our representative democracy, voting is the most basic way citizens can hold elected officials accountable. When more citizens vote, elected officials are more representative of and responsive to their constituencies. One way to engage more voters is to ensure our voting rolls are accurate, up-to-date, and include all eligible voters.

*Automatic voter registration (AVR)* means using information already in government databases to create a more complete and accurate list of eligible voters. Illinois is in the process of implementing AVR at Driver Services and a handful of other state agencies named in the law, that our organization and coalition, Just Democracy Illinois, helped pass in 2017. The law allows for other government agencies, not named in the law, to become automatic voter registration agencies through an administrative process at the State Board of Elections. You should consider making City agencies such as the Public Library and City College Systems AVR agencies. These agencies could use information they already collect, with the active consent of the potential voter, to complete an electronic voter registration application to send to the Chicago Board of Elections.

To ensure the integrity of our voter roles and to prevent accidental registration of non-citizens, these applications need to be “opt-in.” That is, potential voters would need to opt-in to registration and take a specific step to legally affirm they meet the eligibility requirements. Evidence from other states shows that by making the process electronic, and by requiring fewer steps from potential voters, voter registration and voter participation increases. This recommendation could not be implemented within the first 100 days, but your administration could begin conversations with the State Board of Elections to start the process and fully implement well before the next local elections.

State law requires that local election officials whose jurisdiction includes a public four-year university provide *three days of on-campus early voting* at the student union. This reform, first implemented during the 2016 election, has helped boost voter participation on campuses. Some election officials now go above and beyond the requirements, providing more days of on-campus early voting, and extending the “universal polling place” through election day. Some City Colleges may already be early voting sites, but you could work with the Chicago Board of Elections to ensure all City Colleges have at least three days of on-campus early voting to promote student participation.

You should also consider alternative voting systems, such as *ranked choice voting*. With ranked choice voting, voters can rank as many candidates as they want in order of choice. Candidates do best when they attract a strong core of first-choice support while also reaching out for second and even third choices.

To promote inclusion, it is important to remember that many Chicagoans contribute to the public good, citizens and non-citizens alike. While voting reforms aims to involve more citizens, your administration should take steps to *ensure all Chicagoans, regardless of citizenship status, can participate in public life* and contribute to the public good.

### **Financing Campaigns**

Another way community members participate in elections is through contributing money to candidates’ campaigns. As has become overwhelmingly obvious, campaigns are increasingly funded by an incredibly small number of big donors who can give at levels most Chicagoans cannot afford. The perception that government officials are unduly influenced by their donors feeds skepticism and discourages participation in public life.

*Small donor campaign finance programs* promote participation and democratic equity by matching small contributions to qualifying candidates with public funds, allowing a broader, more diverse and representative collection of candidates to run for office, and win.

As a leader of Just Democracy Illinois, Illinois PIRG, along with colleagues from Reform for Illinois and Common Cause Illinois, has formed a working group to build a campaign to bring small donor campaign finance to Chicago. Changing the way we finance our elections will take more than 100 days, but you can demonstrate leadership and put wind in the sails of the reform movement by publicly reiterating your support for small donor campaign finance reform early in your administration.

## Memo

**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**FROM:** Audra Wilson, Executive Director, League of Women Voters of Illinois

**PROMPT:** A more open, representative and diverse government, free of conflicts of interest.

**Proposal:** The Mayor's office **Advisory Council on Equity**, under the umbrella of the Commission of Human Relations, must establish a more authentic advisory role to the Mayor-elect's office, including the creation of a clear mandate in order to ensure that decisions are truly being filtered through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion.

### **Background:**

The current **Advisory Council on Equity** was established by ordinance and has two purposes:

- To advise the Mayor and City Council on policy matters regarding civil rights with a focus on equal access to employment, housing, and public accommodations, and
- To help identify means to educate the public about Chicago's Human Rights and Fair Housing Ordinances, which offer protections against discrimination and hate crimes.

The committee is slotted for 21 seats, but currently, there are **5 vacancies**. Seven seats are up for appointment in January of 2020. According to its public meeting schedule, the Committee has not met since 2016. All that appears publicly is the name and tenure date for the appointees; no resume or other biographical information is available.

Notwithstanding its stated purpose, no policy decisions are required to filter through this Council. As such, it is operating with no clear mandate or authority. All of these factors combined make for an advisory body in name only but with little influence, as its description suggests.

**If fully operational, the Council can be an integral part of the new Administration in infusing the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation. As such, the Council must broaden its scope to advise the Mayor-elect generally on how specific policies and initiatives sought to be introduced will impact diverse communities.**

### **Analysis:**

Diversity is among the greatest assets of the City of Chicago. An inclusive work environment has routinely been proven to enhance organizational performance and innovation, bring different perspectives and solutions to the table, and strengthen a government's ability to serve and protect people from different backgrounds.

Naturally, some of the City's most effective diversity efforts have come through the lens of contracting and/or hiring. This is not surprising, as it is far easier to quantify efforts to recruit and retain a more diverse workforce, as well as increase the capacity and participation of MBEs and WBEs. However, the City has struggled in terms of its broader analysis of **how** its policies impact people of color.

In order to ensure that the City filters its initiatives through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion, the Mayor-elect must truly empower and utilize the Advisory Council. Chicago can also look to New

York City, which introduced several bills in 2017 addressing social inequity reporting and training to ensure that “all New Yorkers, regardless of race, gender and sexual orientation have equal access to services and resources.”

A few examples of how a newly conceptualized Advisory Council could be of great value include:

- The City of Chicago has done a respectable job in identifying low-to-moderate income neighborhoods as part of designation of Opportunity Zones. However, there is no policy to ensure that those neighborhoods receive the investment without displacements;
- Ensuring the proper releasing and promotion of reports: for example, the outgoing Administration undertook a *Youth Quality of Life* study, though it is not clear whether the final it was ever introduced or properly publicized;
- Proper vetting of potentially misleading declarative statements: In a report by the outgoing Administration entitled: “*Building Momentum in a City of Neighborhoods*,” it states, “in almost every neighborhood, we have improved the walkability score to nearly 100%.” However, the report contained no further discussion about those neighborhoods, nor did it attempt to explain the impediments to walkability.

For the next 100 days, the Mayor-elect should:

- Fill the 5 outstanding vacancies of the Advisory Council;
- Make biographies of the existing and future members available to the public;
- Mandate that the Advisory Committee re-establish a regular meeting schedule;
- Require an assessment of the work that the Advisory Committee has been doing, including any policy recommendations that it has made and submitted to the outgoing Mayor for consideration.

For longer-term implementation, the Mayor-elect should:

- Provide a clearer mandate of the Council, including the tasking the committee with implementing the recommendations of the **Resilience Chicago** report, released in March 2019;
- In addition to bolstering the work of the Council, the Mayor-elect should consider broadening and/or redefining the scope of work of the Council.

Potential Challenges:

There are some who might state that there are already numerous initiatives afoot to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in various aspects of City government. The problem, however, is that there is no one currently tasked with **ensuring** that recommendations made by various agencies are actually implemented, hence the recommendation of a bolstered Advisory Council.

**To:** Mayor-Elect Lightfoot Transition Team - Good Governance

**Name:** Derek Eder, DataMade, Chi Hack Night, Civic House

**Prompt:** Create a more accessible government for all Chicagoans including through greater language access and community input on core government functions.

**A potential initiative (one sentence)**

The City of Chicago should launch a Digital Service Delivery Team to lead technology implementation for delivering services to residents.

**How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative**

The City of Chicago should launch a Digital Service Delivery Team to lead technology implementation for delivering services to residents. Chicago can learn from and replicate the successful [18F](#) and [United States Digital Service](#) agencies at the federal level, as well as state and city-level digital agencies in [Massachusetts](#), [California](#), [Austin](#), and [San Francisco](#). These agencies focus on making the experience of government better for residents.

The current state of interacting with many of the City's services is poor. Of the services that the City offers, many of them are difficult to find, confusing to navigate, lack accessibility, and don't offer multi-language support. Additionally, many city services still rely solely on a pen and paper processes and are very difficult for residents to find and complete. As a result, those who get the most out of the City's services are those who are privileged, well resourced, and have enough free time to wade through and understand the process.

By creating a Digital Service Delivery Team, the City can address these challenges by following industry best practices and build services in-house that put the needs of residents first by:

- Making online services available to all Chicagoans
- Letting users guide their work and focus on the resident experience
- Developing quicker and less expensive than before
- Building and releasing code as open source to prevent costly vendor lock-in
- Collaborating as peers with policy and program owners through a design and delivery process that is truly inclusive that delivers real results for residents

It is critical that the Digital Service Delivery Team be created in-house with City staff, as they would need to work with all City agencies without restriction, provide a consistent and reliable set of services, and be able to quickly and effectively shift their focus to the areas of greatest need. Additionally, by building up the City's technical talent internally, it will enable the City to better partner with existing vendors, resulting in higher-quality work and faster execution.

Imagine residents having positive and consistent interactions with their City through well designed, thoughtful, and accessible digital services instead of the frustrating experience they have now. It is possible!

### **What is happening today that we need to keep**

The Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) already has many skilled and competent team members that perform this kind of work, including the data science team and the Design Director. These City staff already know where many, if not all, of the challenges lie but lack the authority and resources to execute. These staff should be kept.

Additionally, the Chicago Design Director has created [chicagodesignsystem.org](http://chicagodesignsystem.org), which provides a strong foundation for how new digital services should consistently function and be designed.

### **What we need to implement in the next 100 days**

The new administration needs to create a Director of Digital Services position who will be responsible for building up the Digital Service Delivery Team. The Director must have sufficient experience and leadership to attract and recruit technical talent.

For early and continued success, this new team needs to be partnered with willing and enthusiastic collaborators in other city departments. As the team delivers these successes, those departments will evangelize their work.

### **What we can plan for longer-term implementation**

The Digital Service Delivery Team will need to implement a road map for transforming the City's digital services in the long term. Existing digital services must be evaluated and ones that are missing must be identified. Then, the team must prioritize their work plan, starting with the highest-impact services first.

### **What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative**

The biggest challenge this initiative faces is sustainability. 18F funds their team using a cost recovery model where they can charge other departments for their work. For the Digital Service Delivery Team to survive and thrive, a similar cost recovery or other funding mechanism should be considered.

Another big challenge will be getting institutional buy-in from DoIT and other City agencies. This team will be operating differently than a traditional IT team and will need high-level buy-in from the Mayor's office and department leadership.



Darryl Holliday  
City Bureau, Co-founder and News Lab Director  
June 15, 2019

To the 2019 Mayoral Transition Team:

Thank you for the opportunity to present this set of recommendations publicly in keeping with Mayor-elect Lori Lightfoot's stated commitments to "equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation." As a Chicagoan and journalist working in the public interest I share a belief in these tenets as the foundation for good local governance.

I'd like to start by saying that I am unaffiliated with the Lightfoot campaign and have not been compensated by or otherwise influenced in making the following recommendations. My recommendations focus on ways to improve avenues for direct citizen involvement in local government. I'll define "citizen" as any person residing in the city of Chicago—regardless of legal citizenship or documentation status.

#### Background

Before changing how residents engage with local government, the city must have a complete view of the various elected and mayoral-appointed boards, commissions, committees and advisory councils that make up local government. There is no centralized portal of all public body meetings in Chicago including meeting dates, times, locations, documentation, agency contact information and membership. However, through my work at City Bureau, [Documenters.org](https://documenters.org) was launched in January 2019 with more than 70 city-level, decision-making boards, commissions and committees including all available meeting dates, times, locations, contact information and documentation in a centralized location for the roughly 500 public governance meetings that take place each month in Chicago.

Our work has found numerous violations of the Open Meetings Act by public bodies in Chicago. These violations of the city's own policies make it much more difficult for citizens to engage with city government, and by extension, to monitor it. When public comment periods at public meetings require pre-registration, equity suffers. When meetings are scheduled without sufficient notice and held in violation of quorum rules, accountability is routed. When information required by law is not made publicly available through documentation or is published in overly broad terms, access is denied. And, most importantly, when the public has no effective recourse for grievances, trust is diminished.

#### Initiatives

Over the next 100 days, the city should hire an independent auditor to:

- Review all public bodies for compliance with the Open Meetings Act.
- Survey all public bodies on their practices for publishing and distributing information.

The independent auditor should issue specific guidelines on government transparency based on the results. The city should adopt these recommendations. In addition, the city should create a public database of all local agencies, commissions, committees and advisory councils, including descriptions of responsibilities and jurisdiction; contact information; demographics for each body, including age, race and gender identification; and locations, dates, times and documentation for public meetings. Furthermore, the auditor should make recommendations for

how to make equitable civic engagement more sustainable in the long run, including, for example, exploring whether an ombudsman, similar to [New York City's elected Public Advocate](#), should be installed as a community liaison with subpoena power in Chicago.

Transformational solutions that diversify power within Chicago's communities can be given solid footing through small steps today. For example:

- Alternate the scheduled time of City Council meetings from morning to evening to promote greater attendance among working-class Chicagoans.
- Alternate the location of public meetings between the Loop and neighborhoods to promote geographic and racial diversity beyond City Hall.
- Translate meeting agendas, minutes and transcripts to promote inclusion and accessibility among non-English speakers.
- Livestream public body meetings.

#### Challenges

Challenges to implementation of these initiative include:

- Resistance on the part of those in power to embrace public scrutiny and new workflows.
- Technical difficulties resulting from diffuse jurisdictions within city government.
- Effective distribution of information to Chicago's neighborhoods.

Solutions include, respectively:

- Improved transparency training, review and oversight.
- Empowering the Department of Information Technology to centralize public body data.
- Working with news media and community organizations to access data and shape data collection methods.

While the recommendations above offer practical avenues for greater civic access in Chicago, transformational processes will go beyond logistics. Equity in local government is, of course, inextricably linked with inclusion. In the long term, [participatory governance](#) practices such as participatory budgeting and "open agendas" that allow citizens to contribute items directly to public body meetings should be designed to bridge the gap between city officials and the public while investing in a new generation of leaders.

**Memo To:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot  
**From:** Dr. Dilara Sayeed  
**Date:** April 2019

### Census 2020 is a Chicago Priority

Census Day is April 1, 2020 - just one year away. Mayor-Elect Lightfoot can make Census a unifying rallying call for all Chicagoans, and gain an early, tangible win with ***Census 2020 - Count Chicago In.***

### Opportunity for All Chicagoans

With a population decline<sup>1</sup> and a budget crisis, ensuring every resident is counted- and collectively bringing more money and resources for Chicago- can be every Chicagoans responsibility- and success.

1. MONEY. Illinois and Chicago are in a budget crisis, and the Census brings in about \$1,500 per resident to our state and city. That is approximately \$3Billion if we count every resident...but definitely hundreds of millions that can realistically be ours.

2. HARD-TO-COUNT COMMUNITIES. Chicago has a significant number of Hard-to-Count communities (noted in red/orange on map). That's swaths of residents; immigrants, children (one of the highest percentage of hard-to-count are under 18), LGBTQ, homeless, undocumented, those suspicious of government, incarcerated, etc.

### Our Values

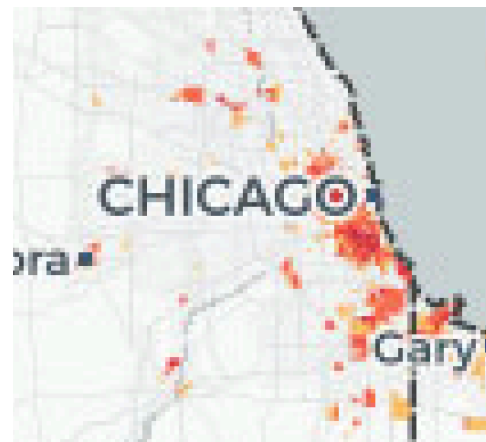
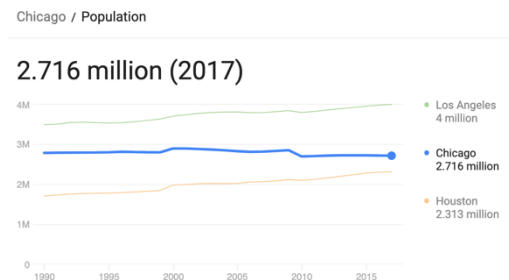
The Census is the ultimate test of our Chicago values articulated by Mayor-Elect Lightfoot; Are we equitable in counting and allocating resources to every resident? Are we inclusive of every Chicagoan - does each of us count - regardless of income, race, lifestyle, faith, sexual orientation, and every other diversity factor? If we are able to count every Chicago resident, the results are transformational; we will have an accurate understanding of the city, its residents, and our needs. And then we can really make this a city that works for each of us!

### What's Working

The City of Chicago recently convened an initial Census Commission. This is an important start for the next year's work. There is a momentum across Illinois to be successful in the Census 2020 and we all want the same thing- count each of us! We can capture this Illinois-wide energy towards the Census, and create education and turnout programming that is motivating and empowering across our city.

### Challenges

1. EDUCATION. There is a great deal of misinformation, suspicion, and unknowns about Census 2020. Education will have to be a huge part of the 2019 efforts leading to 2020. It's like GOTV- we need residents to understand why counting matters, and then actually do it. We are a sanctuary city and some think there will be a citizenship question, even though the courts have ruled it unconstitutional.  
2. CENSUS 2020 IS ONLINE- so ensuring residents know how to take it and making internet access available is key. This year, residents can complete paper Census forms, call and complete on the phone, or complete online form. Support for residents in navigating these options as well as in completing the form is key.  
3. CHICAGO POLITICS, AND FUNDING. Money and equity are involved, and so are politics. Mayor-Elect Lightfoot will have to make this an issue where we must rise above the politics and move as one city. Two Census



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-met-census-chicago-cook-county-population-decline-20190408-story.html>

grants have been released statewide and applications are closed/awarded: Forefront and Secretary of State. Grants worth millions more are in bills or appropriations. How do we ensure communities have access to the funds, as well as designate our own city funds? We will have to spend some money to gain some funding through the Census results. Every state and city are identifying their funding investment for the Census. The state of California, for example, is spending over \$80M in state funding to count every resident. Given our budget challenges, what can Illinois and Chicago do?

### Next Steps

#### 1. MAKE CENSUS A "LISTEN AND LEARN" PRIORITY AREA.

\*Convene key community groups and leaders in this space. Ensure we are inclusive and fair to Chicago's diverse communities. Listen to their plans, ideas, and concerns on the Census.

\*Convene another such meeting of non-profits. We have many more non-profits that can help with the count than ever before - let's empower them.

The Census is already a complex issue in Chicago, and is quickly getting even more complex- even a little tense.

#### 2. MAKE CHICAGO CENSUS COMMISSION EVEN MORE INCLUSIVE.

The current Mayor has identified a Census Commission. Mayor-Elect's value of diversity and inclusion are key to our Census 2020 success. Ensure there is strong representation from many communities that are traditionally under-represented in Chicago. Many activists and community leaders are knowledgeable about the Census work in the city- please call on all of us to serve this initiative.

#### 3. TWO PARTS TO CENSUS 2020:

**EDUCATION.** May 2019 – March 2020 will be all about Census education. Utilize existing models across the nation to develop education programming, and build Chicago-wide buy in for Census 2020. Build a strategy that includes all departments, a website, and a full media campaign. Census turnout is similar to GOTV efforts for voter turnout. Let's use similar strategies where applicable.

**TURNOUT.** Have a city-wide campaign to dedicate March 2020 as *Census 2020 - Count Chicago In* - encourage early Census completion (Census forms will be mailed to households mid-March 2020 - tentative), track progress, hold Census parties at public libraries, park districts, etc. Mayor-Elect Lightfoot's family can show that they are working on the form together to complete. Other key city leaders and community activists can do the same.

### Resources

\* Hard to Count Map: <https://www.censushardtcountmaps2020.us/>

\*State of Illinois Census website: <https://www.illinoiscensus2020.com/>

\*Forefront website: <http://ilcountmein2020.org/>

Hundreds of resources exist on Census 2020.



**Our opportunity to bring millions of dollars to our city and bring all Chicagoans together**

***Census 2020 - Count Chicago In***

**Charge to the Good Governance Committee**  
**By Co-Chair Dick Simpson**

As a transition team our first obligation is to help Mayor Lightfoot to implement her stated program upon which the voters elected her with a mandate to do so.

As mayor, Lori will:

- Implement mayoral term limits
- Ban profiting from public service
- Improve workers' compensation oversight
- Strengthen government oversight (strengthening inspector generals)
- Make FOIA work for all Chicagoans
- Bring transparency to tax increment financing (TIF)
- Merge county and city election administration
- Eliminate legal conflicts of interest, and
- Hold budget town halls

Our second obligation is to offer new suggestions to create “a more open, representative and diverse government, free from conflicts of interest.”

**Immediate Action:**

Mayor Lightfoot has said that she wants to implement both mayoral and aldermanic term limits. My assumption is that this can be done legally and effectively by ordinance. So based on the ordinances of other cities like New York, we need to draft this legislation. (The legality of other means like Executive Order should be explored but I do not believe they will work. The President's term limits required a Constitutional Amendment.)

About two days after Inauguration on May 20<sup>th</sup>, the city council organizes itself in a couple of key votes which will determine the basic pattern or split over the next four years. It adopts Rules of Order which could include: 1) number of committee, cutting from 16 to 10 or so and requiring monthly meetings, 2) rules against seating aldermen after 10 years of service (the legality of which has to be researched), 3) rules against outside employment, 4) rules against representing private clients before any other government agency, 5) allow citizen testimony by election means as with Springfield, 6) have all meetings of the council and its major committees web streamed and covered by CAN TV, 6) committee chairmanships, and 7) committee memberships. We have to determine which of these changes to push and for which we can get 30 votes. The other side is offering committee chairmanships and patronage appointments to oppose the mayor and her city council team.

**Middle Term (by Fall)**

The committee needs to consult BGA and outside experts on strengthening the inspector generals, making FOIA work better, and Transparency to TIFS. We need to have people working on each of these area.

**Long Term (By October)**

We need to plan for budget town halls in October and have meetings with the County on merging the Board of Election Commissions and the County Clerk's election function.

We will begin our first meeting by suggestions for four or five more good government steps and then divide responsibilities for drafting those sections of the transition team report due in early May.



To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot  
From: Elliot Richardson, Small Business Advocacy Council

**Reduce City Council Control Over Administrative Functions:**  
**Public Way Use Permits for Simple Signs Should Not Require City Council Approval**

Potential Initiative

Eliminate the requirement that business owners procure full City Council approval prior to being issued a public way use (“PWU”) permit to display a simple sign that minimally protrudes over the public way.

What Is Happening Today That We Need to Keep

Business owners who wish to place an array of items on the public way must obtain PWU permits to ensure residents can traverse sidewalks and walkways. PWU permits are an appropriate way to ensure the safety and integrity of local communities throughout Chicago.

What We Need to Implement in the Next 100 Days

Business owners hoping to display a simple sign announcing they have opened in a local community must not only obtain the approval of their alderman, they must have a PWU permit approved by the Chicago City Council. The process can cause unnecessary delays and impact the success of new businesses. This is the current process for obtaining a PWU permit for a simple sign that minimally protrudes over the public way:

- An application for a PWU permit must be completed and submitted to the alderman of the ward where the business is located;
- After receiving the alderman’s approval, the application goes City Council’s Committee on Transportation and Public Way;
- The application is held by the Committee until such time as the Committee meets and votes on the permit;
- If approved in Committee, the application is sent to the full City Council for review. The PWU permit is then voted on at the next City Council meeting;
- If approved by City Council, the PWU permit is issued to the small business owner.

In addition to a PWU permit, the business owner must apply for a permit from the Department of Buildings for the actual sign itself, separate from process for obtaining a public way use permit. There is no logical reason to maintain the requirement that PWU permits be approved by the Chicago City Council.

We recommend the Mayor's Office propose an ordinance eliminating the need for City Council to approve a PWU permit for a simple sign within the next 100 days. This ordinance should only apply to non-electric signs that protrude less than 12 inches over the public way and pose no safety risks.

Also, under current law, a public way use permit expires after five years. We recommend this ordinance clarifies that if the sign related to the public way use permit is unchanged, that permit be automatically renewed without reapplication.

The ordinance should make the process for obtaining a PWU permit administrative in nature while ensuring alderman can raise objections to a sign with language or graphics that have a detrimental impact on local communities.

#### What We Can Plan for Longer-Term Implementation

A comprehensive review should be done to determine which functions currently within the province of City Council are administrative in nature. Removing non-legislative activities from City Council will make Chicago's government function more efficiently. It will also improve the perception that Chicago is a difficult place to grow a business.

Another longer-term initiative that will improve the functionality of Chicago's government, save resources and positively impact the small business community is allowing business owners to pay certain ordinance violations, including those related to signs, without having to hire an attorney and attend an administrative hearing. The SBAC and our coalition partners worked with the City on this initiative and there are presently ten ordinance violations that no longer require a hearing. This should be expanded quickly to other ordinance violations that do not impact the safety, health and welfare of residents.

#### What Challenges We Might Encounter in Executing on this Initiative

Changing the status quo while often necessary, can sometimes be difficult. Moreover, the City will need to ensure adequate staffing and resources to process PWU sign permits because they will not be delayed in City Council. These challenges should not stand in the way of making Chicago's government function better for small businesses and local communities.



**Name:** Griselda Vega Samuel, Regional Counsel  
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)

**Transition Committee:** Good Governance

**Objective:** More accessible government through language access and community input on government core functions.

**Initiative #1:** MALDEF proposes that the administration focus on creating a more accessible government for all Chicagoans through improved readability of city communications, as well as in a variety of languages once the improvements are complete.

### ***Current Status***

Currently, city websites and publications are inaccessible to many Chicagoans. The main problems are reading level and visual organization. In a city with vast disparities in income and education, it is imperative that all websites and communiques with the public be written in clear, simple language and be user-friendly and intuitive. Once this overhaul is complete, the new information should be translated into a variety of languages, as has been the norm for several years. The administration's goals are amplified through this initiative. It creates equality by ensuring all Chicagoans have access to the same information and services. It creates transparency and accountability by informing the greater public of what is happening in city government. And it allows previously excluded groups to be better served and better aware of what the city is doing.

### ***Proposed changes to support this initiative***

#### ***Maintain the websites and literature until the review process is completed***

While the changes are being made, we propose that the current websites and literature be maintained as they are. While they are imperfect, they are the only source of information currently available and we would not want to further restrict access.

#### ***Immediate necessary actions to support this initiative***

Within the next 100 days the administration needs to create a plan and begin a readability review so that we can ensure that the reading level is at the level of the average Chicagoan from our poorest communities. We recommend the administration look to the reading level in these communities due to the extreme disparities in wealth, education, access and income in Chicago. These extremes make it likely that the overall average reading level of the city will still be higher than that of Chicagoans who have been systematically excluded from full participation in city government. The same review should also be done for the translated portions of the website.

At the same time, the administration should also plan and begin a website design review to ensure that city websites are more user-friendly and intuitive.

### *Long-term actions*

Long-term, we recommend the city begin to hold small town halls or other forums where community leaders and members can provide feedback on proposed changes. This information and feedback should be recorded and used in the creation of new documents. We recommend the forums and feedback should be updated and redone every four years.

### *Potential challenges*

The key potential challenges for this initiative are its sheer size and the potential expense. However, these challenges are the same challenges faced by any new city initiative and are not insurmountable if adequate resources and time are dedicated to the task.

**Initiative #2: MALDEF proposes focusing on the 2020 Census and investing proper funding specifically for community outreach and education to traditionally Hard to Count Communities, both geographic and demographic, as well as those who are at risk of being undercounted. Chicago has the largest proportion of hard to count communities in the state.**

**Values:** If the 2020 Census is to achieve the administration's values – equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion-- it must invest to ensure that every person in Illinois is counted. The federal government is undermining the Census by putting forward an ill-advised citizenship question, insufficiently testing new procedures, and being openly hostile to immigrants and Latinos. Illinois stands to lose billions in federal funding and two of our eighteen congressional representatives. MALDEF, with other advocates, and as a member of Illinois Compete Count Commission, propose an Illinois Census outreach campaign plan be put in place, and that this plan includes additional state and local funding needed to ensure Illinois achieves a complete count.

**Current Status:** Mayor Rahm Emanuel has convened a City of Chicago Complete Count Committee made of a variety of leaders, heavily focused on the private sector. A partnership with the private sector will be important as we are inching closer to the beginning of 2020 Census; yet, if this Census outreach is to be both inclusive, equitable and transparent we will need to reach the most vulnerable communities in the City of Chicago. By adding more trusted community-based partners to help guide and inform the outreach and community education efforts we will help ensure the census outreach efforts are inclusive, and this will expect will lead to a more complete count which would potentially lead to a more equitable distribution of representation and resources.

**Next 100 days:** Add additional community-based partners working with hard to count communities from across the city; leadership must decide what amount of funding they will contribute to the Census effort; and a strategic plan to coordinate with county and state complete count commissions to avoid duplication of efforts.

**Longer-term implementation:** If the efforts and resources are not invested to ensure we count every person in the city and state, the long-term issues will be a thwarted population count and a loss of congressional and electoral seats making redistricting efforts difficult.

**Challenges:** Funding, fear/mistrust and information sharing are among the main challenges for the 2020 Census. There are limited funds and many important issues to support, yet if there is not a proper amount of investment by the city it will lose millions of dollars of the very resources it needs to continue. MALDEF has heard from various communities around the state and the main concern has been that with the 2020 Census people will need to go online to submit their responses - people are weary of both inputting private information as well as, once the information is submitted who will have access to the data and how it will be used. The large distrust of the federal government will lead to many people refusing to fill out the census, we will **need trusted partners in the communities** to help educate and inform people that protections are in place and the critical importance of filling out the census so that the adequate and fair amount of resources return to their communities and state.

## MEMORANDUM

Name: Jay Young, Executive Director, Common Cause Illinois  
jyoung@commoncause.org

Transition Committee: Good Governance Committee

### POTENTIAL INITIATIVE SUMMARY

**Campaign finance reform for all municipal elections**, reflecting the new administration's dedication to a more open, representative and diverse government, free from conflicts of interest.

### IMPLEMENTING THE ADMINISTRATION'S VALUES

As the Mayor-Elect noted in her position paper, "[m]any Chicagoans have a cynical view of city government that is rooted in their experiences or perceptions that Chicago...responds to and works only for those with political clout." This cynical view has, as its genesis, not just the conduct of politicians in office, but in the way those politicians get elected. Voters know that way that we fund our elections is fixed to benefit the wealthy and well-connected.

**Implementing a robust campaign finance reform package would reflect the new administration's values and commitment to a more open, representative and diverse government, free from conflicts of interest.** There are a variety of approaches to municipal campaign finance reform. Any one of them will revolutionize the face of Chicago's donor pool and its rate of civic participation. Whether through a donor match program or a voucher program, campaign finance reform will bring communities across Chicago into the political process, empowering them to have a seat at a table long dominated by the white, the wealthy and the well-connected. The evidence from municipalities that have already implemented reform is clear: it engages lower income voters and youth voters and creates a more ethnically diverse donor pool as well. It also creates a more responsive, inclusive government and restores faith in institutions long marred by corruption.

### THE EXISTING GROUNDWORK

Chicago is ready for reform. **In February of 2015, 79% of Chicago voters supported an advisory ballot question calling for a small donor match program.** About a year later, in January 2016, a Fair Elections ordinance was introduced in City Council providing for a 6-to-1 public match on contributions up to \$175. While the ordinance did not advance, the latest municipal elections reflected a record number of candidates pledging to support reforming our campaign finance framework.

Nationally, 14 states provide some form of public financing option for campaigns, but the movement to restore power to the people has focused on the municipal level across America as well. In Seattle, eligible residents receive four \$25 vouchers that they can contribute to candidates who agree to limits on cash contributions and campaign spending limits. In Denver, voters have approved of citizen-funded elections which lower contribution limits, prohibit corporations from contributing to candidates and matches small contributions at a rate of 9-to-1. In New York City, its long standing Matching Funds Program provides for a 6-to-1 match (voters approved changes to the program in 2018, raising the match to 8-to-1 along with other reforms). And, last year, voters in Baltimore and Washington, DC supported creating public funds which would match small-dollar donations. Albuquerque, New Mexico and Austin, Texas are also currently considering public financing proposals.

**The trend in municipalities nationally is clear.** It's why Common Cause Illinois and its partners solicited pledges from aldermanic and mayoral candidates during the 2018 and 2019 runoff elections to gauge their support for a broad commitment to reducing the influence of money in politics and reforming our broken campaign finance system. Dozens of candidates expressed their desire for reform, including the Mayor-Elect. To capitalize on this momentum, Common Cause Illinois formed a working group with its Just Democracy colleagues Reform for Illinois and Illinois PIRG to bring small donor campaign finance to Chicago. By stepping forward to show leadership on this issue, the Mayor-Elect can create a City government that is of, by, and for the people—a democracy where everyone has an equal voice and our elected officials are held accountable to our needs.

## THE NEXT 100 DAYS

One of the most important things that the Mayor-Elect can do in the first 100 days to ensure that everyone participates in our democracy, that every vote is counted, and everyone's voice is heard is to **publicly reaffirm her commitment to campaign finance reform**. She should also appoint a member of her administration to serve as a **point person to work with community-based organizations and other key stakeholders** to develop a plan to provide a publicly-funded alternative for municipal elections.

## LONG TERM IMPLEMENTATION

Once the Mayor's office has crafted its plan based on research and community input, the battle for votes begin. While the last election showcased that many incumbents and incoming members of the City Council have an appetite for reform, **building a broad consensus that receives support from a majority of the Council on all aspects of the plan** -- including how the program is funded -- will require a sustained outreach and education campaign by the Mayor's office and its community partners.

## CHALLENGES

There is a reason why campaign finance reform has failed previously despite the fact that Chicago is one most progressive cities in the nation. The status quo is supported by a powerful network of politicians and special interests who have benefitted from an insulated system operating in the shadows. This is why collaboration with and mobilization of democracy reform groups will be critical to counterbalancing those influences. If Chicago -- with its infamous history of corruption, machine politics, and entrenched special interests -- is able to join the wave of municipalities embracing reform, it would be a watershed moment for the reform movement nationally.



**TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot**

**FROM: Khadine Bennett (ACLU of Illinois), Good Governance Committee Co-Chair**

**A potential initiative (one sentence):**

- Increase the quality and quantity of publically available, easily accessible information available to Chicagoans, especially related to emerging technologies, which can have a disproportionately harmful impact on poor communities and communities of color.

**How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:**

- Increase the availability of public information accessible online relating to an agency's budget, leadership structure, policies and procedures, disclosure of vendors, existence of databases and the use of artificial intelligence, algorithms and automated decision systems, so that FOIAs aren't required to access those records. When making those, and other documents and communications publicly available, City entities (departments, agencies, offices) should take language, socioeconomic, disability, education, and digital access differences into account.
- Ensure that emerging technologies, like artificial intelligence, algorithms and automated decision systems, are adopted and implemented fairly and equitably, regularly tested for discriminatory bias, auditable to ensure due process, and information about the design, function and data used is transparent and publicly available.

**What we need to implement in the next 100 days:**

- Make frequently requested data sets and documents that are of general public interest available in a public database, similar to the FBI vault found here: <https://vault.fbi.gov/reading-room-index>
- Ensure that all data that is required to be collected under consent decrees, settlements, polices, state and local laws are publicly available in an easy to access, searchable format.
- Require departments and agencies to resume the practice of keeping FOIA logs updated on a quarterly basis.
- Sign an executive order that requires the immediate identification of all artificial intelligence, algorithms and automated decision systems in use within City government and public disclosure of the results.

**What we can plan for longer-term implementation:**

- Reduce long delays in getting information requested via FOIA
  - Streamlining of the FOIA process. This could include changing how FOIAs are requested, how agencies respond to requestors when information is available online, and how internal departments communicate with each other to fulfill FOIAs.
  - Improved recordkeeping process.
  - An ordinance establishing how the City will interpret and operationalize FOIA, including definitions, its understanding of exemptions, and its default position to disclose.
  - Identify an enforcement mechanism for agencies that fail to comply.
  - Oversight from the OIG, including a complaint mechanism and structure that would bring in the OIG when enough complaints have been filed.
- Ensure transparency in the City's use of artificial intelligence, algorithms and automated decision systems by implementing an accountability framework, such as an Algorithmic Impact Assessments tool, to assess and monitor automated decision systems and increase public disclosure and accountability.

**What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:**

- FOIA offices may be understaffed (with officers handling 100-150 requests each at any given time).
- FOIA officers may have to request records from other departments (e.g., R&D, CPIC) and have no control over when they'll receive them.
- Artificial intelligence, algorithm and automated decision system vendors may refuse to provide the information necessary for full transparency, citing proprietary limitations or secrecy as a term of use.

**From Marie Dillon  
Director of Policy  
Better Government Association**

**Initiative:** Mayor Lightfoot and the City Council should revisit and reform the aldermanic menu program to ensure that it is equitable and that it better addresses infrastructure needs citywide.

A 2017 audit by the city inspector general (<https://igchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/CDOT-Aldermanic-Menu-Program-Audit.pdf>) explains this in detail. But to be brief: The menu program is an inefficient and inequitable way to allocate scarce dollars intended for neighborhood improvements. It also disadvantages the same wards that are shortchanged, for example, by the TIF program.

Wards have more or less equal populations, but vary greatly in geographic size. Giving each ward \$1.3 million for residential infrastructure needs means the money goes much farther in densely populated (usually more affluent) neighborhoods. Less wealthy wards can't keep up with sidewalk repair, while more affluent wards have menu money to spend on things like dog parks and basketball courts.

Aldermen enjoy having some measure of control over improvements in their wards. Many of them hold "participatory budgeting" meetings at which residents help set spending priorities for those dollars. But money for basic repair and maintenance needs is inadequate, which makes it especially important to prioritize those needs citywide, not ward by ward.

**What is happening today that we should keep:** Keep the menu program, possibly smaller, for discretionary ward projects. It's reasonable for aldermen to have some sort of capital "allowance" to spend as they wish in their wards. There is merit in letting residents have some input into how their tax dollars are spent.

**What should be implemented quickly:** Sort projects into necessary vs. discretionary, with an eye to separate planning and funding in the future. Street lighting, alley and sidewalk repairs, etc., would be handled by city planners looking at the big picture, with spending prioritized by needs. Menu money would be for extras determined locally.

**What to plan long-term:** Neighborhood improvements should be prioritized far into the future and citywide. Leaders also have to figure out how to get more money for those needs.

**What challenges are likely:** Taking away local control is a hard sell, especially if it means less money for discretionary projects. The bigger challenge will be to generate more money overall, for basics *and* extras.



**How this addresses the administration's stated values:**

**Equity:** Less affluent wards won't be shortchanged simply because they are geographically larger. If a (perhaps smaller) menu program remains, residents of all wards will have comparable allowances for amenities like dog parks. Basics like sidewalk repairs or streetlights will be funded more efficiently and fairly if those decisions are based on miles of road instead of number of residents.

**Transparency, accountability:** These decisions can be made in public and details should be accessible to anyone who wants to see how the money is being spent -- not just in their own ward but everywhere.

**Diversity and inclusion:** If all wards have some discretionary money, then all residents will get to do "participatory budgeting," not just residents of more affluent wards.

**Transformation:** Equitable distribution of funding, citywide planning of improvements (and a lot more money) will transform neighborhoods that have fallen into disrepair.



## **Good Governance Transition Committee Memorandum**

**To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot**

**From: Madeleine Doubek, Executive Director, CHANGE Illinois  
Good Governance Transition Committee member**

Among the objectives you campaigned on was one to create a more efficient and effective government through city-county and other government collaborations. As you've noted the city's finances are dire, therefore it's critical that every effort be made to streamline and achieve those efficiencies.

To achieve it, **create a Chicago Efficiency Initiative** that starts with a full audit of city government and its spending.

**What exists today that we need to keep:** ☐ Rahm Emanuel and Toni Preckwinkle already examined opportunities for consolidation and collaboration in city and county governments, but not all recommendations were implemented. [Revisit it](#), implement the rest and continue to look for more opportunities.

### **What needs implementing in the next 100 days:**

**Mandate reporting** by the Council Office on Financial Accountability. The powers of [this office were improved](#) recently, but results still don't seem to be published or publicized. It previously has worked only at the direction of one alderman. The office should be required to audit and report out on budgets and all actions that spend taxpayer dollars. Consider modeling it after the Congressional Budget Office or COGFA and removing it from Council and mayor's reach.

**Analyze city programs** and services to ascertain what may not be necessary, practical or affordable, and what could be consolidated with sister agencies.

**Eliminate overlap and duplication** between City Council committees and Sister Agency (CHA, CTA, PBC, parking and library boards) boards. Some sister agencies might also be folded into city government.

### **What needs longer-term implementation** ☐

**Implement zero-based budgeting** to eliminate duplication and excess.

**Consider putting the functions** of the City Clerk and Treasurer under city government or at least combining the two offices into one.

**Pension crisis.** Call for all parties to come together in the city and state to address the pension crisis without extending payment ramps. Bring labor to the table to reach consensus on a solution.

**What challenges might we encounter in executing this initiative:** ☐ Bureaucratic inertia and opposition. Several of these initiatives directly threaten the power of officeholders, labor unions or agencies. Delay is no longer an option. The city's finances are dire and constant financial crises only serve to drive residents to move elsewhere.



## **Good Governance Transition Committee Memorandum**

**To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot**

**From: Madeleine Doubek, Executive Director, CHANGE Illinois  
Good Governance Transition Committee member**

In a campaign cycle that saw an FBI probe into allegations the city's longest-serving alderman shook down a fast-food restaurant owner, another alderman wore a wire, and a third convicted of wire fraud, your victory makes it clear there is a hunger for a change toward ethics, truly representative democracy and accountability. As you noted, Chicago residents expect quick action to institute public policies that will transform systems so any resident can run and win and officials know they must act in the public's interest or they will be held to account if they falter.

**Voters have made it clear they share your commitment to create “a more open, representative and diverse government, free from conflicts of interest.”**

**To achieve it, create a “Conflict-Free Chicago”** -- a city government where politicians truly are representative public servants who must operate with integrity and accountability, leaving behind the Chicago Machine and ward boss systems.

**What exists today that we need to keep:** ☐

[2-156-030\(a\) \(Improper Influence\)](#) and [2-156-080\(a\) \(Conflicts of Interest\)](#). Section 2-156-030(a) states that no official or employee shall make, participate in making or in any way attempt to use his position to influence any city governmental decision or action in which he knows that he has any economic interest distinguishable from its effect on the public. Section 2-156-080(a) states that no official or employee shall make or participate in the making of any governmental decision with respect to any matter in which he has any economic interest.

**Rule 41's provision** allowing two aldermen to move a proposal out of committee to the floor.

**What needs implementing in the next 100 days: Fair-hearing rule.** Create a council rule that allows for a floor hearing and vote, or reconsideration, if a super-majority of aldermen support it. This would prevent situations where proposals are bottled up by not being assigned to a committee, as has occurred in Springfield with the Fair Maps Amendment.

**End conflicts of interest in City Hall.** Too often, aldermen hold outside jobs that cause a loss of public trust in government as politicians enrich themselves. Make City Hall a conflict-free zone: 1. Pass an ordinance banning as much outside employment as is possible. Ban aldermen from representing clients in tax abatement, bankruptcy or environmental proceedings that affect city revenue or the health, safety or welfare of residents. 2. Improve disclosure requirements for conflicts of interest and for the state's required statements of economic interest. (See attachments for previous recommended improvements.) Empower the Inspector General to enforce them. Require the ethics board to review conflict disclosures for sufficient detail and

assess penalties for noncompliance. Prohibit aldermen from presiding over proceedings that will include a conflict-of-interest recusal. 3. Pass an anti-nepotism ordinance to prevent spoils-system politics that reward political families and fiefdoms with inflated pay and no-work/no-show jobs. Rather than aldermanic relatives being placed on payrolls, Chicago should be a place where what you know matters, not who you know. 4. Prohibit city officials and workers from touching projects that involve relatives or friends, such as reviewing permits and licenses or conducting inspections. 5. Require calls or transactions by aldermen, staff and city officials to be documented and published. 6. Consult with the board of ethics and IG offices for further recommendations. 7. Broaden the ban on campaign contributions from people with city business or contracts to at least one year before and after that business is considered.

**What needs longer-term implementation**□: Elections in Chicago and Illinois lack equity due to rigged maps and ballots. Lead by using your influence now to end this corruption in both arenas.

**Increase ballot access for all:** End petition-challenge games by adopting digital signature collection for candidates, reduce the number of signatures required to run for office in Chicago and Cook County to match statewide standards, and require candidates to file phone numbers and email addresses. These moves, encompassed in the Ballot Access for All Act (SB2083/[HB3114](#)), will allow more average citizens to run and win.

**End gerrymandering:** There can be no trust in government if elections are a farce because of rigged city and state maps. Chicagoans deserve a government that looks like them and represents them fairly. Pass a city ordinance to stop politicians from picking their own constituents and enact an [independent commission](#) to draw ward maps. Push hard for adoption of the Fair Maps Amendment statewide. Instead of [splitting up neighborhoods](#) to create safe seats or give certain alderman access to financial capital to support their reelection campaigns, fair maps would create a City Council that reflects the diversity of this great city and allows residents to know who represents them.

**Empower people to participate in government:** As recent council action on the 78 and the Lincoln Yards deals demonstrate, many residents believe they don't have a voice in government. Improve that by: 1. Enacting an ordinance that requires a minimum number of days proposed ordinances or other city actions must be made public before a vote can be taken or a contract awarded. [California's Prop 54](#) requires that every bill be in print and posted online for at least 72 hours before a final vote. 2. Establishing a witness-slipping system so residents and organizations can weigh in on legislation. Mirroring the General Assembly's system (with needed technology updates) would give residents the chance to let their voices be heard before an ordinance is debated or voted upon. 3. Following through on livestreaming committee hearings to allow residents to more easily monitor their government. 4. Creating an Office of the People's Advocate. Its employees would regularly travel to and interact with neighborhood residents to keep them apprised of city government, accountability and transparency initiatives.

**What challenges might we encounter in executing this initiative:**□ Aldermanic opposition. Several of these initiatives directly threaten the power aldermen hold. They threaten the livelihoods of election and tax lawyers, who thrive by writing and controlling the rules. More than 300,000 Chicagoans voted for change. They sent a clear and powerful message from every ward that they want equitable and ethical elections and governments they can trust.

April 15, 2019

**To:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**From:** Reform for Illinois

**Transition Committee:** Good Governance

**Prompt:** Make City elected officials more accountable and more representative of the communities they serve

**Objective: Establish a Fair Elections Fund to provide public financing for Chicago campaigns**

A Fair Elections Fund for Chicago elections would amplify the voices of ordinary Chicagoans in their democracy, reduce the power of special interests and machine insiders, and make our government more responsive and accountable to the people it's supposed to serve.

**How Fair Elections programs advance equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion**

**Not everyone has an equal voice in Chicago's government.** The voices of ordinary people are drowned out by wealthy donors, special interests, and party insiders who can afford to contribute massive amounts of money to influence elections. Only about 1% of campaign funds in Chicago's mayoral election came from "small" donations of \$150 or less, while megadonors and party organizations flood campaigns with contributions in the tens of thousands or even millions. The result is a government that isn't representative of voters - or responsive enough to their needs.

**A Fair Elections program would give Chicago's democracy back to the people.** Fair Elections Funds work by using public dollars to supplement the campaign donations of everyday citizens. They are always voluntary and can take different forms including small donor matching, in which a small donation is turned into a large one with matching public funds (for example, a 9:1 match turns a \$10 contribution into a \$100 contribution), "democracy vouchers" that provide voters with a set amount of public funds to contribute to their favored candidate, and others. Participating candidates typically accept restrictions on who they accept money from, increasing donor transparency.

All these programs empower ordinary voters to make meaningful contributions to the candidate of their choice, and they empower candidates who don't have access to deep pockets or political networks - but do know how to inspire regular people in their community - to run for office and win.

**When candidates rely on ordinary citizens to fund their campaigns instead of special interests and machine insiders, the whole system changes.** The potential for "pay to play" corruption is reduced, corrupt politicians are less insulated from competition, and representatives have more incentive to enact equitable policies that benefit everyone, not just a select few. Officials become accountable to the constituents who need them the most, not those who pay them the most.

**Fair Elections Funds increase candidate and donor diversity.** Fair Elections programs have been shown to increase the number of women and people of color in elected office, and to increase the diversity of people who donate to campaigns and participate in the political process. The impact is particularly pronounced in historically disenfranchised communities; New York City's program caused donor participation in minority communities to increase by as much as *twenty-four times*. Letitia James, the first African-American woman to be elected New York Attorney General, won her first race using New York City's small donor matching program. She said that while she lacked personal wealth or a powerful political network, "**The public financing system gave me the opportunity to compete and succeed, allowing me to represent individuals whose voices are historically ignored.**"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mehta, Ava. 2016. "Breaking Down Barriers: The Faces of Small Donor Public Financing." Edited by DeNora GetaChew. <https://www.brennancenter.org/publication/breaking-down-barriers-faces-small-donor-public-financing>

**Chicagoans are ready to join other major cities in implementing a Fair Elections program.** In 2015, 79% of Chicago voters approved an advisory referendum that would establish a publicly financed Fair Elections Fund, but the city council failed to act. It's time for Chicago to join New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, Denver, Baltimore, and other jurisdictions that are using this vital reform to create a more ethical and equitable government that's accountable to the people it serves.

### **What is happening now that we need to keep**

The City of Chicago has a number of beneficial measures in place that address the role of money in politics, including limits on city vendors' campaign contributions and disclosure requirements for lobbyist compensation. While such measures are essential and should be preserved or strengthened, their scope is limited. None of them tackle the root causes of corruption and inequity the way Fair Elections programs can by putting power over Chicago's government into the hands of ordinary citizens.

### **The next 100 days**

#### **Convene a Fair Elections task force to develop legislation and an advocacy and implementation plan.**

Reform for Illinois is a member of the Just Democracy Coalition and has been working with IL PIRG and Common Cause IL to lay the groundwork for a Fair Elections plan for Chicago. We have long collaborated with good government groups, city officials, and other stakeholders on campaign finance reform and would welcome the opportunity to convene or participate in a Fair Elections task force to analyze Chicago's requirements for a successful program and formulate an advocacy and implementation plan. Reform for Illinois has also been deeply involved in drafting legislation for similar programs at the state, county, and local level - we currently have a statewide small donor matching bill (SB1733/HB3712) in the 101st ILGA - and can work with task force members to develop a draft city ordinance.

### **Longer-term implementation**

**Negotiation between stakeholders.** The next phase will involve negotiations among Fair Elections task force participants, the mayor's office, city council members, budget officials, and other stakeholders to reach consensus on a viable policy proposal. This phase may also involve broader advocacy, outreach, and public education efforts. The long-term goal will be passage and implementation of a Fair Elections program in time for the 2023 municipal elections.

### **Challenges**

**Budgetary considerations.** As with most city programs, a key challenge will be addressing concerns about the cost of a Fair Elections Fund. While cost is a factor for any budget item, such programs typically comprise less than 1% of a municipality's outlays. In addition, studies show that by reducing systemic corruption, public financing programs can pay for themselves. A New York State commission found that "reducing the role of big donors in financing campaigns will reduce in turn the pressure donors place on our elected officials to provide targeted tax breaks for special interests and to spend public funds on pork barrel projects of doubtful public value." The report noted that **"the elimination of just one wasteful tax expenditure or one unnecessary spending program could cover the full cost of the program."**<sup>2</sup>

**Changing the status quo.** All significant political reforms can face resistance from those who are accustomed to the current system and may have benefitted from its rules. Partnership with elected officials will be critical to developing a robust program that can help candidates and representatives succeed in a more democratic, equitable campaign finance system.

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<sup>2</sup> "The Case for Small Donor Public Financing in New York State." 2019. *Brennan Center for Justice*, 10, citing the Moreland Commission report, 47.

**Michael L. Shakman  
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April 15, 2019

To the Mayor-Elect Lightfoot Good Governance Transition Committee

**Maintaining and improving a non-political  
employment system for the City of Chicago**

Chicago had a notorious patronage system of public employment for decades. It caused massive inefficiencies in providing City services, cost the taxpayers millions in wasted dollars, deprived honest applicants of the opportunity to seek and fairly obtain public jobs, and distorted the democratic process by giving political bosses control over public employees, who had to work for their election and the election of those they supported.

Mayor Lightfoot should not assume that the City's reformed public employment system will remain in place without her direct and strong support.

Based on almost 50 years in attempting to make public employment by the City of Chicago non-political and fair, I have these suggestions:

The Mayor cannot rely on the existing City employment system to be self-perpetuating. Federal court oversight ended in 2014, based on the City adopting an employment plan and putting in place a means of enforcing compliance with it. A fair plan by itself is not enough. Enforcement and support has to come from several sources and in several ways. It needs to be reemphasized and supported.

First, most important is the tone and direction set by Mayor Lightfoot. It is essential that the Mayor make clear that non-political hiring, job assignment and other employment benefits are the norm, that she requires City departments and employees to adhere to that norm, and that (as is now required) employees who learn of violations must report them.

Second, a professional, non-political personnel department is essential. The Department of Human Resources now administers the hiring and promotion practices of the City. It has the duty to insist on compliance with the City's non-political hiring plans across all agencies. A top priority has to be a high quality and transparent Department. By all indications, the Department currently meets that requirement. The Mayor needs to insure that it stays that way by making sure that it retains qualified people educated in the need to maintain the present non-political employment system, and committed to that goal.



Third, a vigorous and independent monitor to investigate and publicly report on allegations of violations is essential. Chicago's current Inspector General does a first-rate job. But in addition to a highly qualified and independent leader, like Joe Ferguson, the office needs an adequate budget and broader authority than it presently has. The recent comments by BPI and David Hoffman focus on ways to improve the effectiveness of the IG. The Mayor should make them a top priority to broaden the jurisdiction of the office and give it assured resources to do its job.

Fourth, the law allows the Mayor to take political affiliation into account for a small number of City jobs. Examples are the heads of City Departments, spokespersons for policy-makers and confidential assistants to policy-makers. But the fact that such positions fall outside the City's non-political hiring plan and may be filled based on political affiliation does not mean that the positions should be filled for the wrong reasons, or with people who are not qualified, as often has happened. Exempt positions should not be awarded to favor supporters or to pay back political debts. How Mayor Lightfoot fills the exempt positions will send an important message about what kind of administration she will have, since these are the people who will (or should) be making City policy and communicating it to the public.

Fifth, while these comments focus on public employment, an equally important area is public contracting. Awarding City contracts on the basis of connections or political contributions presents many of the same issues, and threatens many of the same harms, as hiring and firing for political reasons.

Likewise, the inappropriate influence of aldermen in awarding or controlling a wide range of City benefits is of equal concern, as the recent prosecutions of several aldermen illustrate. These are areas where major reforms are essential.

I would be happy to expand on these comments.

## MEMORADUM

**FROM: MATT TOPIC**  
**TO: LIGHTFOOT GOOD GOVERNANCE TRANSITION COMMITTEE**  
**RE: TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE**  
**DATE: APRIL 15, 2019**

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Thank you for the invitation to participate. I will focus my comments on transparency and the Freedom of Information Act, using the format you requested.<sup>1</sup>

### **(1) What does the City do well?**

Nothing about the City's current FOIA practices are worth noting or retaining. They reflect, at best, partial compliance with the statute.

### **(2) What could improve in the short term?**

Upon inauguration, the Mayor should promulgate a policy, applicable to all departments and sister agencies, as follows below. The Mayor should convene the FOIA discussion group described on page five of the Position Paper on a regular basis to discuss further refinements; I have received suggestions from requesters that are more granular than would be suitable for a general policy, but are fruitful areas for further discussion in that setting. Having received comments about my proposal from many journalists, I encourage the Mayor-elect to sit down with a diverse range of Chicago journalists to address their broader concerns about how the new administration can treat the media better and more fairly than the current one, beyond FOIA.

*Consistent with the City's fundamental obligation of transparency, the policy of the City is to release all public records, regardless of available legal exemptions, except in the following circumstances. (1) A record must be withheld if state or federal law unambiguously prohibits the release of the record. (2) A record may be withheld if (a) an exemption, limited to its narrowest reasonable interpretation, clearly applies to the record and no plausible legal argument against the exemption claim can be identified; (b) City residents are certain to suffer a specific, clearly identified, and significant harm from release of the specific record; (c) the harm to City residents clearly outweighs the public interest in disclosure; and (d) the record does not shed any light on actual or possible waste, mismanagement, or misconduct in City government, or the use of public funds. It is the expectation of the City that under this policy, public records will rarely be withheld from the public regardless of a legal basis to withhold them. Decisions on FOIA requests shall be made only by the FOIA Officer and must be free of any political interference. No City officials are permitted to discuss or consider the political ramifications or potential embarrassment to any City officials of the release of requested records.*

*Each department shall post on its website by the fifth business day of each month all denial or partial denial letters, and all FOIA requests that remain pending in violation of the applicable FOIA exemptions, from the last calendar month . Failure to respond to a FOIA request by the deadline shall be considered a serious disciplinary infraction for the persons responsible, and rarely, if ever, will be excused.*

*The City will no longer assert the “deliberative process” exemption under Section 7(1)(f) under any circumstances.*

*The City will not defend privacy or trade secret claims of people or commercial entities who do business or seek to do business with the City. If a request calls for the release of such information, the City will notify the third party and provide the third party an opportunity to intervene to object, but the City will not defend any such claims. The City will release all proposals and bids once a final selection has been made and before any contract is executed.*

*While the City may rely on the “undue burden” exemption under Section 3(g) in limited circumstances, use of the exemption is strongly discouraged and the City will comply with existing case law holding that a request for records in the public interest is not unduly burdensome where it would take several weeks of full-time work to comply. Undue burden should not be asserted when the work involved in litigating the denial exceeds the work involved in complying with the request. Any burden that is the result of inadequate or obsolete record-keeping practices or systems may not be considered as part of the burden analysis. Requests may not be denied as unduly burdensome solely because they seek “any and all” records related to a subject or do not specify the email addresses to be searched; rather, the FOIA Officer must undertake a reasonable investigation as to what records are reasonably available, generally through discussions with a knowledgeable City subject matter expert. Each City department shall track each assertion of the undue burden exemption and the estimated number of hours that would have been required to comply, and shall report to the Mayor’s Office each quarter the number of additional hours that would have allowed for production of those records, which the Mayor’s Office will use to assess the need for additional FOIA compliance resources. The City shall confer with requesters in good faith about narrowing requests before denying them based on undue burden, which shall include offering the requester a specific proposed revised scope that would not be unduly burdensome, which may include an inquiry with the requester to determine priorities, or offering to comply with the request in full if the requester agrees to an additional extension of time. Departments are encouraged to seek additional resources from the Mayor’s Office to comply with specific requests or the overall volume of requests they are receiving before denying requests based on undue burden.*

*City employees are prohibited from conducting City business in a way that deliberately avoids the creation or disclosure of records, such as avoidance of email communication or use of encrypted or unsanctioned communication tools.*

*Any communications about public business within the scope of a City employee's job duties that take place on non-City accounts or devices are public records and property of the City. Failure to comply with this policy shall be treated as a serious disciplinary infraction, conversion of City property, and a violation of the Local Records Act that subjects the employee to potential civil and criminal liability, which the City will enforce to the fullest possible extent and refer to the Cook County State's Attorney's Office when appropriate.*

*While FOIA does not require answers to questions, City officials are expected to be prompt and forthright in response to questions from the media or the public to the fullest possible extent, and are prohibited from considering the political ramifications or potential embarrassment to any City officials when providing such responses.*

*The Law Department is directed to review all pending FOIA cases and provide a memo to the Mayor's Office within 21 days for each case, explaining the City's legal position, the requester's legal position, and why it is in the public interest not to release the requested records even if the Law Department believes that they are exempt.*

### **(3) What long term-transparency goals should be pursued?**

The City should develop a best-in-the-world practice of affirmative release of data and records. I defer to the Committee member representing DataMade on that issue, and ask that the Committee solicit the views of Jamie Kalven on police accountability data. The City should create an inventory of all databases and fields, and a plain English description of those fields, and publish them on a City website to facilitate easier access by the public. The City should develop a process for the public to request that the City create particular records or track particular data of interest to those groups. The City should pass an ordinance that requires the release of all Inspector General reports upon their completion. The City should implement "open email" systems like those currently used by city councils in Estes Park, CO, and Jacksonville, FL.

I am happy to answer any questions or concerns. Every administration promises to be the most transparent in history but rarely delivers. This proposed policy, and a top-level commitment to an ongoing transparency evaluation, would make Chicago a model.

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<sup>i</sup> My comments are not legal advice, and it is my understanding that you are not seeking legal advice and will not provide any information that could create any conflicts of interest with regard to any lawsuits in which I am or could be adverse to the City. My participation is contingent upon that understanding. As a matter of disclosure, the Committee should know that I presently represent various clients that would be positively impacted by my proposal, and that if the City reconsiders its position in pending cases, it may result in an award of prevailing party attorney fees and costs to my firm. These things were not a factor in developing my proposal.

## TRANSITION MEMO

Date: April 12, 2019  
To: Transition Committee  
From: Noelle Brennan  
Committee: Good Governance  
Topic: Cleaning Up City Government

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Although this topic does not fit precisely into one of the nine specific agenda items in Mayor-elect Lightfoot's Position Paper on Good Governance, it is applicable to "Cleaning Up City Government" because it seeks to address corruption in City Government.

**Proposal:** Institute a **City-wide Hatch Act** (often called Little Hatch Act) restricting city employees from engaging in certain political activities. The specific restrictions will be commensurate to each employee's rank or managerial level. More than thirty states have a Little Hatch Act.

Instituting a Little Hatch Act for City of Chicago employees will:

- Reduce patronage hiring and employment actions;
- Reduce pressure on city employees to campaign and support specific candidates;
- Reduce City managers' ability to raise funds or demand campaign work from city employees;
- Offer equal access to City jobs, employment benefits (such as overtime, time off, etc.); and
- Encourage city employees to complain about violations to the City's Inspector General.

**What is Happening Today that need to keep:** An enforcement mechanism through the City Inspector General already exists.

**Implement in next 100 days:** Draft legislation and garner support from City Council, existing City employees and public.

**Longer Term Implementation:** Pass and enforce ordinance.

**Challenges:** Ensuring that legislation is constitutional. The Hatch Act itself has withstood constitutional challenges.



Vera G. Davis  
Chairman

Karl A. Brinson  
President

April 15, 2019

Remel Terry, Good Governance Committee

This memo shall serve as the blueprint for what Mayor-elect Lightfoot's administration needs to maintain, implement immediately and long-term to reverse migration of Black Chicagoans out of Chicago. It is imperative that this new administration is adaptive and equitably responsive to the needs and interests of the existing Black residents of Chicago especially those that reside on the West Side.

### **Appointments**

#### **Implement immediately**

- Appointments of West Side residents that are actively engaged and involved in the community to every board and commission.
- Mayor's Office staff specifically dedicated to the needs of the West Side and staff in the Mayor's office directing policy specifically, but not limited to, Economic Development, Public Safety and Transportation.

#### **Implement long-term**

- Designate 10% of Shakman Exempt positions to be filled by West Side residents for departments and sister agencies.

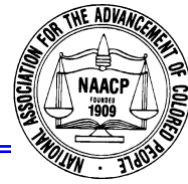
### **Economic Equity**

#### **Continue**

- Neighborhood Opportunity Fund
- Thrive Zones for small businesses

#### **Implement long-term**

- **Small Business Funding Initiative** allocate \$150 million annually that will provide grants and tax incentives to existing and potential businesses.
- **West Side Food Desert Funding Initiative** ensures long-term that the West Side has viable supermarkets, preferably within 6 block radiuses of its residents.
- **9% Tax Credits** - \$1.5 million of the City's \$6 million Federal allocation to be earmarked for West Side projects.
- **Home Funds** – 25% of City's Federal allocation to be earmarked for West Side projects.
- Propose and enforce required membership diversity goals, project hiring goals, community benefit agreements included in every trade contract negotiated by the City of Chicago (with penalty for non-compliance).
- 10 million annual budgetary line item for citywide summer jobs program for West Side youth.
- 15 million annual budgetary line for Put Illinois to Work design job program for 18-30 year old West Siders.



**Vera G. Davis**  
Chairman

**Karl A. Brinson**  
President

**Education**  
**Continue**

- **City Colleges** free tuition incentive for Chicago Public School (CPS) students.

**Health**

**Implement immediately**

- Re-open mental health facilities closed under the Emanuel administration.

**Housing**

**Continue**

- Programs such as West Side ARO pilot, City Lots for Working Lots, etc.

**Implement long-term**

- Establish affordable housing for handicapped/disabled individuals under age 55.

**Infrastructure and Capital Improvement**

**Implement immediately**

- Assign 12.5% of all infrastructure and capital dollars be spent the 5 Black Wards (24, 27, 28, 29, and 37) passing the City Council earmarked specifically for construction projects and technical support within West Side Wards.

**Public Safety**

**Implement immediately**

- Create a publicly accessible website that streams the streetlight camera footage and access to crime report details such as classification, date, location.
- Allocate funding to build and strengthen Block clubs in high crime communities (Block by Block).

**Implement long-term**

- Review and amend the recruitment and retention of Black officers onto the police force.

**Recreation and Transportation**

**Implement immediately**

- Appoint a West Side resident as a Park Board commissioner that has been actively engaged and involved in the community.
- Re-open the California and Kostner blue line stops.

**Implement long-term**

- Secure corporate and private sponsorship for local park districts in predominantly Black communities to provide funding for capital improvement and programming (Corporate or Private Adopt a Park)

The items outlined in this document are attainable with commitment of the Lightfoot administration to change the tale of three cities into one.



# COMMUNITY RENEWAL SOCIETY

— FAITH IN ACTION FOR THE COMMON GOOD —

**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**FROM:** Rev. Saeed Richardson, Director of Policy, Community Renewal Society

**RE: Greater accountability, impact, and investment of infrastructure and financing in areas most socioeconomically devastated in the City of Chicago**

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As reflected in Mayor-elect Lightfoot's "Cleaning Up City Government" proposal, the City's tax increment financing (TIF) tool is in need of reform. The record \$1 billion dollars generated in 2017 reflects significant gains, however, the distribution of those funds reveals the reality that significant portions were directed to developments in affluent neighborhoods, rather than those which could (and arguably should) benefit much more from the fund's impact. While the presented changes for strengthening the standards of qualification for TIF (raising standards for the definitions of "blighted" areas and the "but for" test in ascertaining whether improvements could occur without funding) are necessary steps, it is recommended that additional measures be implemented to ensure a future of properly allocated resources. These measures are not immediate, nor will they likely fall within a 100-day time frame, however they are worthy of consideration within the next 1-2 calendar years.

## **Recommendation #1: Formalized community centered TIF administration alongside civic leadership**

While it is somewhat promising that a few city-councilpersons and the executive branch are engaging in this work, it is necessary to involve the greater Chicagoland community in the process of evaluating requests and validating the work post-allocation of funds. Public halls and the sort (as suggested) are valuable tools for garnering public feedback, however, community input and participation is also requisite in a formalized manner to ensure that the aforementioned standards directly reflect the needs of those communities most in need of TIF support. This will also aid in the endeavors of directing and collecting community feedback and ensuring that potential developers and recipients of funds are in constant communication with citizens of the city. This recommendation is at pause to use the word oversight to describe the role of this entity, however, this structure needs to be one that maintains some form of significance and influence, and sustains constant input, feedback, and participation in the decision making process for the distribution of funds. This memorandum does not define how large, from where the community members are geographically located, or the extent to which they have influence over the process, however, a formal community/citizen-reflected entity is a first recommendation.

## **Recommendation #2: Designated portion of TIF funding for basic level infrastructure support**

Chicagoans know immediately which parts of the City have the most well-maintained roadways and sidewalks, the best and most beautiful public community gathering spaces (parks, playgrounds, walkways, gardens, etc. ), and the most structurally sound educational and other public structures. While most TIF projects are utilized for determining the large scale funded projects (hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars) across Chicago, there exist spaces within the City that could benefit from relatively low levels of funding to ensure that a basic minimum threshold of infrastructure is provided. Given the large amount of funds annually generated by TIF, a portion of those funds could be designated to ensure

KNOWLEDGE > ACTION > CHANGE

that all communities (beginning with those most in need) have a base level of infrastructure serviced to their neighborhoods.

All communities should have access to well-cared-for roads, streets, and sanitation services; non-polluted, non-lead filled utility systems that bring water to homes; well-maintained and relatively modern public spaces for children and all members of a community to enjoy; structurally sound and maintained public schools; and all communities across the city should believe that neighborhood beautification and investment is paramount for all, not simply communities deemed worthy of such resources. Furthermore, allocation of these resources should not simply be allocated based upon (as done in past administrations) how aligned an alderwoman/alderman is to the mayor of the city.

Several measures would need to be determined for this to come to pass: the percentage allocation of the TIF funds utilized for this, language and criterion for a minimum level of infrastructure service, and a listing of areas and projects across the city most in need of the minimum threshold of service (which should directly correlate to the need to revise the current list of TIF designated areas).

These recommendations do obviously require more conversation, planning, and research, to be brought to fruition and, furthermore, represent work, alongside a great many other endeavors, that are needed to ensure a positive quality of life for all in our city. I eagerly look forward to working in this Good Governance Committee to make a better Chicago for all her citizens and employees.

Rev. Saeed Richardson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Saeed Richardson', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Director of Policy  
Community Renewal Society

# Chicago Votes

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Stevie Valles, Executive Director of Chicago Votes

**Objective:** A more open, representative and diverse government, free from conflicts of interest.

**Initiative:** Create a City Government that reflects, respects and validates the voices of Chicago youth. (For the purposes of this memo, youth refers to people between the ages of 18 and 35)

The following is an explanation of how Mayor-Elect Lightfoot's values of Equity, Transparency, Accountability, Diversity, and Inclusion, and Transformation will be infused into this initiative:

## EQUITY -

- **Establish Youth Advisory Council:** A committee of youth stakeholders should be established to represent the lived experiences of youth in Chicago. Representation should include youth who have been incarcerated, experienced frequent unemployment, students, organizers, and artists. Participants should receive a city stipend.
- **Utilize Data to Identify Community Groups from At-Risk Communities To Make Appointments:** Data should be utilized to identify groups to make appointments to the youth advisory council. Community groups should come from communities that are the most in need. Specifically, areas that do not have community schools, lack access to fresh produce, have high incarceration and unemployment rates, have less access to mental health supports and have higher rates of violence.

## TRANSPARENCY -

- **Ending Closed Door Meetings:** City government should end the process in place where an authority can decide who can and cannot come into meetings. This process has been used to deliberately keep youth out of meetings. Specifically, city council meetings that are open to the public.
- **Diversifying the Time and Location of City Council Meetings:** The time and location of city meetings should be scheduled to ensure more young people are able to attend.
- **Improve Public Facing Communications:** Public facing communications should be improved to have more live television and/or online coverage of meetings, and at least a one week notice of legislation to be discussed in meetings.
- **Citywide Participatory Budgeting:** The city should enact a citywide participatory budget process.

## ACCOUNTABILITY -

- **Give Youth an Official Role in Holding City Government Accountable:** The city should establish a Youth Advisory Council to serve as the youth voice in city government and be a watchdog, on behalf of youth, for areas of city corruption.
- **Community Elected Public Advocate:** Alternatively, or in addition to the Youth Advisory Council, the city should consider an elected position of Public Advocate to be an independent watchdog on behalf of ALL citizens in Chicago.

# Chicago Votes

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION -

- ***Remove Alienating Language from City Government:*** Official titles like Alderman or Committeeman should be changed to Alderperson and Committeeperson to be gender inclusive. All language should be vetted to ensure it doesn't alienate any of the city's citizens.
- ***Give Voices from Nontraditional Places a Formal Role in Decision Making:*** Youth that has had interactions with city agencies should have a formal role in advising those agency's functions. For example, youth that has been incarcerated should have a voice in policing and incarceration; youth who were raised in foster care should have a voice in advising improvements to the foster care system.
- ***Oversight to Address Inequities Proven By Data:*** The Office of Inspector General's website proves disturbing trends in policing, gender wage gaps, and budgeting. There should be independent oversight to hold those responsible for these trends accountable.

## TRANSFORMATION -

- ***Youth Should Take the Lead in Creating a New Political Culture in Chicago:*** The culture of corruption in Chicago politics must be transformed and replaced with a culture of innovation, ideas, equity, and love. Youth voices must lead the way in making this process happen. In order for that to be achieved, Chicago youth should have an official role in city government in the form of an advisory council.

### ***What is happening now that should keep happening?***

- Witness slips on the county level.
- Participatory budgeting on the ward level in some wards.
- Data tracking by the office of Inspector General.

### ***What do we need to implement in the next 100 days?***

- A Youth Advisory Committee.
- Ending City Hall Lockouts.
- An Executive Order to reform alienating language.
- An Executive Order to permit community groups to make appointments for the Youth Advisory Committee.

### ***What we can plan for in terms of long-term implementation?***

- Mandated citywide and ward-based participatory budgeting.
- Changing the municipal election day to summer.
- Elected Public Advocate.

### ***What challenges will we face?***

- The tension between new voices and ideas conflicting with those of the status quo.
- Overcoming distrust of City Government and its officials by youth.